

Coyotes and to a lesser extent feral dogs are a problem throughout California including San Bernardino County. The two species can be confused but there are several generalities that help to distinguish between them.

Coyotes are more active at night.
Coyotes run with their tails down.
Coyote tails are very bushy.
Coyotes are a tan-brown color with some gray.
Coyotes do not usually bark.

Feral dogs are more active in the day.
Feral dog tails are usually not bushy.
Feral dogs have a variety of colors and spots.
Feral dogs bark and growl.

Both of these animals cause problems by getting into trash, killing pets and threatening people. They also carry diseases such as rabies, distemper and tularemia.

Coyotes and feral dogs will eat just about anything although meat and garbage is preferred. They are attracted into an area by the presence of food, water and shelter. Eliminating these items can help prevent these animals from becoming a problem around your home or recreational area. Coyotes are most aggressive and dangerous when raising their young. This occurs from March through September. They will attack other animals that come too close to their den or young.

PREVENTION MEASURES

FOOD: Never feed a coyote or feral dog. Make sure your trashcans have tight fitting lids. Do not leave food waste in your recreational areas. Put it in the trash receptacle and close the lid! Feed your pet during the day either inside or in a secure area. Do not leave food or water outside during the night. For that matter, do not leave your pet, especially cats and small dogs outside at night where coyotes or feral dogs might be a problem. Control rodents such as ground squirrels, rabbits, gophers and mice around your property. Removing fallen fruit and harvesting ripe vegetables is also recommended.

WATER: Remove or empty pet water dishes each night. Special water spigots for pets can be attached to outdoor faucets if your pet must remain outside at night. Fix leaking outdoor faucets and set sprinklers to water after dawn.

Coyotes often chew on drip irrigation pipe. Burying the pipe helps prevent this. Emitter tubes can be enclosed in a short section of rigid PVC pipe. Watering during the day reduces the attractiveness of this water source.

Ponds can be eliminated as a water source by lowering the level of the water to about 8" below the edge and altering the landscaping to reduce access. A wire mesh or heavy plastic screen can be suspended 2-4" over the pond's surface. Chicken wire is suitable if set high enough.

SHELTER: Seldom used buildings should have secure doors. Shrubs should be pruned up off of the ground. Debris piles should be eliminated.

Coyotes live in dens found in steep banks, rock crevices, sinkholes and dense brush. They often enlarge holes made by ground squirrels, skunks and other animals. The typical opening is about 12 to 18 inches and the den may extend 4 to 50 feet deep.

Fences should be at least 5 1/2 feet tall and extend into the ground 6 inches. A wire mesh can be attached to the base of wood fences or buried next to block walls. Bury this mesh 6 inches and extend it 15 to 20 inches out from the fence or wall.

Pet depredation can be minimized by giving your pet a place to escape to. Pet doors often will allow the animal to escape but can provide access to coyotes and feral dogs. Climbing posts and trees provide an escape route for cats. If using a post, it should be at least 7 feet high with a platform where the cat can sit. Keeping them inside is best.

CONTROL MEASURES

Trapping coyotes is not recommended for amateurs. Feral dogs may be trapped using a standard box trap available from most animal control offices or this department. Do not relocate trapped feral dogs. Trapped feral dogs can be picked up by the local animal control agency.

Do not leave a trap unattended for more than 24 hours. Leaving an animal in a trap during the day is cruel. Shade the trap if you will not be able to check it first thing in the morning.

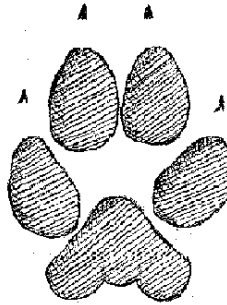
Coyotes can be controlled by the use of a properly placed snare trap or by shooting. Because of the risks involved it is recommended that this be done by a professional trapper or by the County. Shooting is not permitted in most areas without police or sheriff permits.

LEGAL STATUS

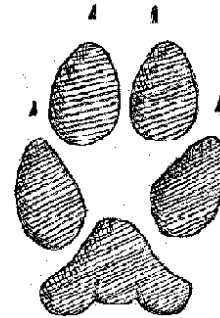
Coyotes and feral dogs are classified as nongame mammals by the Department of Fish and Game and may be taken at any time using approved methods.

Coyote

Front



Rear



Paw prints by Kim A. Cabrera

SOLVING WILDLIFE PROBLEMS

COYOTES FERAL DOGS



**San Bernardino County
Department of
Agriculture/Weights &
Measures
1-800-734-9459**